

FOOD INFORMATION

ISSUED BY THE FOOD INFORMATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

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CANADA'S FOOD EXPORTS: 1935-1939 and 1945.

The war operated in a number of ways to affect Canada's production of foodstuffs and to influence the volume, value, and direction of her food export trade. There was an approximate 40% overall increase in food production achieved despite a very considerable reduction in available man power. To make the most effective use of shipping space, export demand was for foods of high nutritive value - wheat and protein foods such as meat, fish, dairy products and eggs. Accordingly, these commodities were emphasized in production plans and increased supplies were reflected not only in larger exports but also, except in the case of fish, in greater domestic disappearance. Advances in food technology, such as improved methods of dehydration and the development of a bacon cure, which enhanced its keeping qualities, enabled Canada to help overcome shipping problems and to meet the needs of her wartime overseas markets.

In the spring of 1946 the Prime Minister was able to state, "In proportion to our population, Canada has exported, to meet the needs of the world over the past few years, more food than any other nation." In terms of value alone, the per capita export of foodstuffs increased from \$23.4 in 1939 to \$36.9 in 1945.

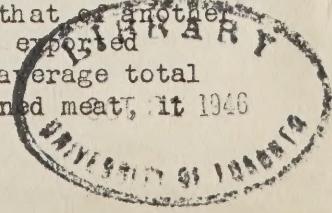
The spread of hostilities reduced the number of countries with which Canada formerly traded, but more extensive markets were opened up for many of her products. The United Kingdom became increasingly dependent on Canada for foodstuffs, as her normal sources of supply either fell into enemy hands or were cut off by lack of shipping facilities. Canada succeeded in meeting the majority of the United Kingdom's requests, and in many cases shipped considerably more than was contracted for. The Food Agreements (bacon, beef, evaporated milk, cheese and eggs) made between the two countries during the war were later extended, and now include contracts covering wheat and flour, poultry and fruits. These agreements are assurance that the people of Great Britain will continue to receive a substantial portion of their import food requirements from Canada for several years.

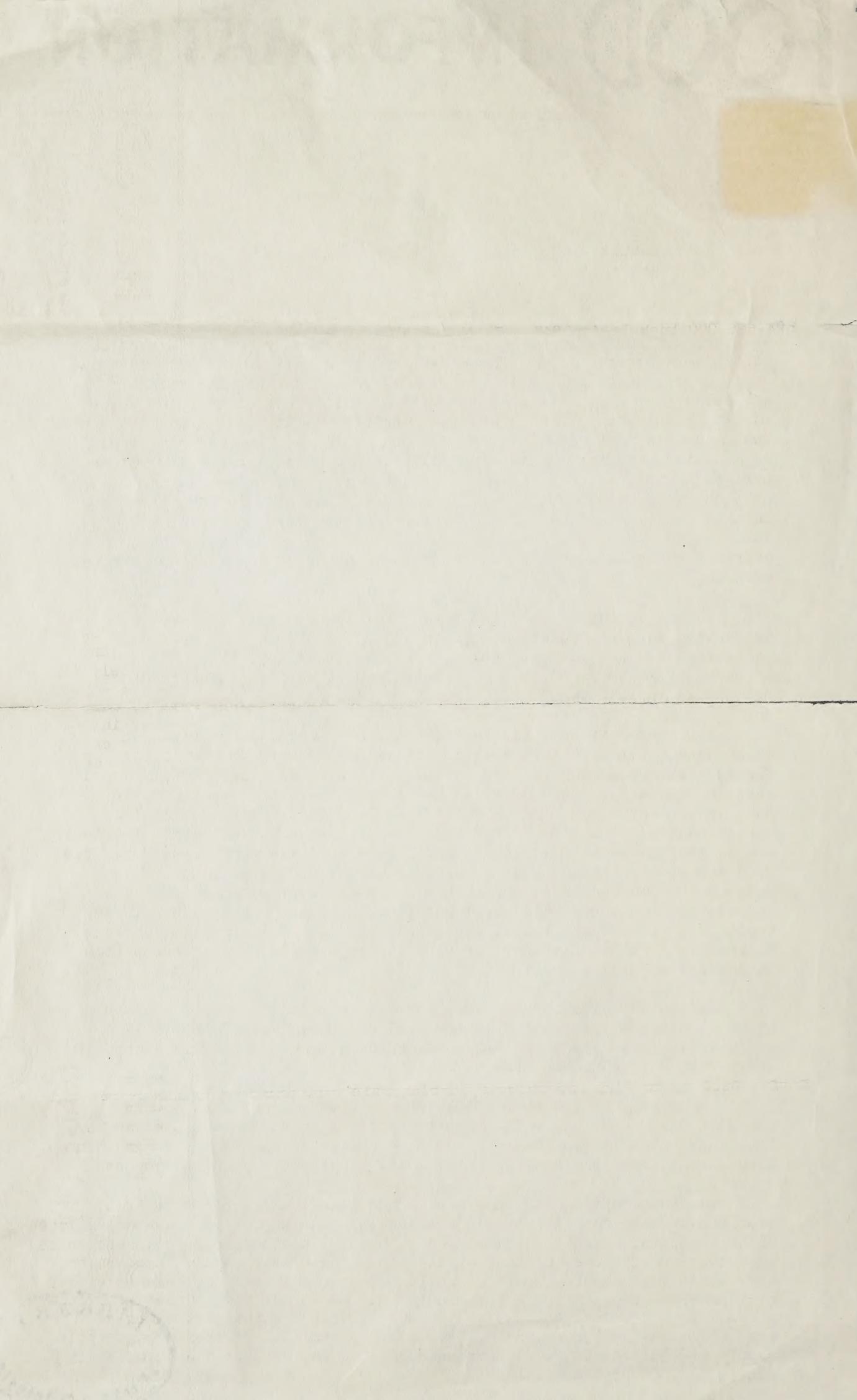
Canada has also assumed an important role in the supply program of UNRRA since its formation in the fall of 1944. From October, 1944, to July 31, 1946, the total value of Canadian food commitments, including shipments, for UNRRA amounted to \$121,769,558.

Loans made to a number of the war-devastated countries by the Canadian Government under the Export Credits Insurance Act passed in May, 1944, have made it possible for these countries to resume trade with Canada. Food commodities rank high on their lists of urgently required imports.

The accompanying bar charts show the relative increases in 1945, over the average for 1935-39, in total supply and export of those commodities which constitute Canada's major food exports. The total supply in each case is inclusive of stocks on hand at the beginning of the period, production and, where such occur, imports. While the proportionate increase in either total supply or export of any commodity may be compared with that of another commodity, the actual amounts of the supply or the quantities exported are, of course, not comparable. For example, in 1935-39 the average total supply of beef was 641,000,000 pounds, but in the case of canned meat, it 1946 was 18,000,000 pounds.

Ottawa, 1946]





WHEAT

Canada has long been one of the world's principal producers and exporters of wheat. In the early years of the war there was a relatively greater demand for meat than for wheat. Accordingly, in 1941 the government inaugurated a wheat acreage reduction program and encouraged greater seeding to coarse grains for livestock feeding. Acreage fell from an average of 25,595,000 in 1935-39 to an average of 22,466,000 for the years 1940-44. Nevertheless, excellent crops resulted in production being considerably increased over the prewar period. Exports during this period likewise increased, from an average of 180,000,000 bushels of wheat (including flour in terms of wheat) per year in the 1935-39 period to 337,516,000 bushels in the 1945-46 crop year. Carry-over, which amounted to 102,911,000 bushels in 1939, reached a peak of 594,626,000 bushels in 1943. It then declined, until by the end of the 1945-46 crop year there were 69,858,000 bushels on hand - the smallest carryover since 1938. This was due not only to the relatively small crop in 1945, but also to increased shipments, especially to the liberated areas. Of the 1945-46 exports, approximately 18% was in the form of flour. Wheat alone was shipped to forty-three different countries. In 1946, in an effort to help relieve the world grain shortage, Canadian producers increased the acreage seeded to wheat to 25,900,000 acres, some 12% more than in 1945, and the highest seeded acreage since 1940. The first official estimate of 1946 production was placed at 440,567,000 bushels which will be the highest since the 1942 record crop of 556,684,000 bushels.

MEAT

In looking at the bar charts for meats, it must be kept in mind that only meat from animals which have passed through federally inspected slaughter plants is exported. Producers have been encouraged to market their animals through inspected plants and of the total 1945 meat supply, approximately 73% came from inspected slaughter houses. Inspected slaughterings of hogs showed a 68% increase over prewar, while non-inspected slaughterings rose by 55%. Comparable figures for cattle are 108% and 41%, respectively. Of the inspected slaughterings, approximately two out of three hogs and one out of four cattle were exported during 1945. Currently, exports for all meat are at the rate of approximately 35% of production. It should also be kept in mind that a proportion of the increased total supply of both pork and beef in 1945 went to make up the very large increase in exports of canned meat.

Pork - When war broke out, the United Kingdom asked Canada to increase her exports of pork products as quickly as possible. Through the concerted efforts of producers noteworthy results were achieved and exports have gone almost entirely to the United Kingdom. Peak hog production, paralleling the increase in supplies of coarse grains for livestock feed, was reached in 1944. Exports for that year amounted to 718,465,000 pounds. Since then there has been a considerable decline, coincident with decreases in feed supplies and increased labour difficulties. The number of hogs on farms at December 1, 1943, was estimated to be 9,473,000 but by June 1, 1945, the hog population had fallen by more than one-third. Nevertheless, in 1945, exports amounted to 462,049,000 pounds, 157% above the 1935-39 yearly average of 179,630,000 pounds.

Beef - Beef production has shown a considerable rise during the war years, and reached an all-time high in 1945. Not until 1944 did beef figure significantly in Canadian exports. In that year the United Kingdom made its first beef agreement with Canada. The contract called for one hundred million pounds from January 1, 1944, to December 31, 1945. However, the actual quantity shipped during this two-year period amounted to 348,500,000 pounds. In 1945 beef exports had risen from a prewar yearly average of 10,899,000 to 212,150,000 pounds, an increase of 1847%.

Canned Meat - Canned meat was a comparatively small item of either production or export in prewar years. It accounted for approximately one per cent of Canada's per capita meat consumption. A rapid expansion has occurred in this industry since 1944. Since UNRRA began its work in the fall of 1944, export

requirements have increased enormously. Aside from UNRRA purchases, large consignments of canned meat have been sent to France, Belgium and Holland, as well as to the United Kingdom. For four months, from May 1945, the sale of canned meat on the domestic market was prohibited, except in certain remote areas. This enabled maximum quantities to be shipped overseas. When domestic meat rationing was resumed in September, 1945, supplies of canned meat were sufficient for it to be included in the ration. The 132,800,000 pounds, exported in 1945 form a striking contrast to the 1,990,000 pounds average annual export in the years 1935-39.

FISH

Wartime fisheries production was well maintained, despite deficiencies of labour and fishing vessels. In particular, production of canned fish showed considerable expansion. Canada has always exported the major part of her fisheries production, but the war created an unprecedented demand and certain types, e.g., canned salmon, were almost entirely set aside for export. Canned fish exports rose from 136,000,000 pounds in 1939 to 183,900,000 pounds in 1944, an increase of 35%. Over the same period, exports of fresh, frozen and cured fish increased from 369,200,000 to 481,200,000 pounds or 30%. Imports of shellfish and of certain canned specialties, e.g., shrimp, tuna and sardines, were restricted during the war, and domestic consumption of canned fish, as well as of fish in other forms, declined from prewar levels.

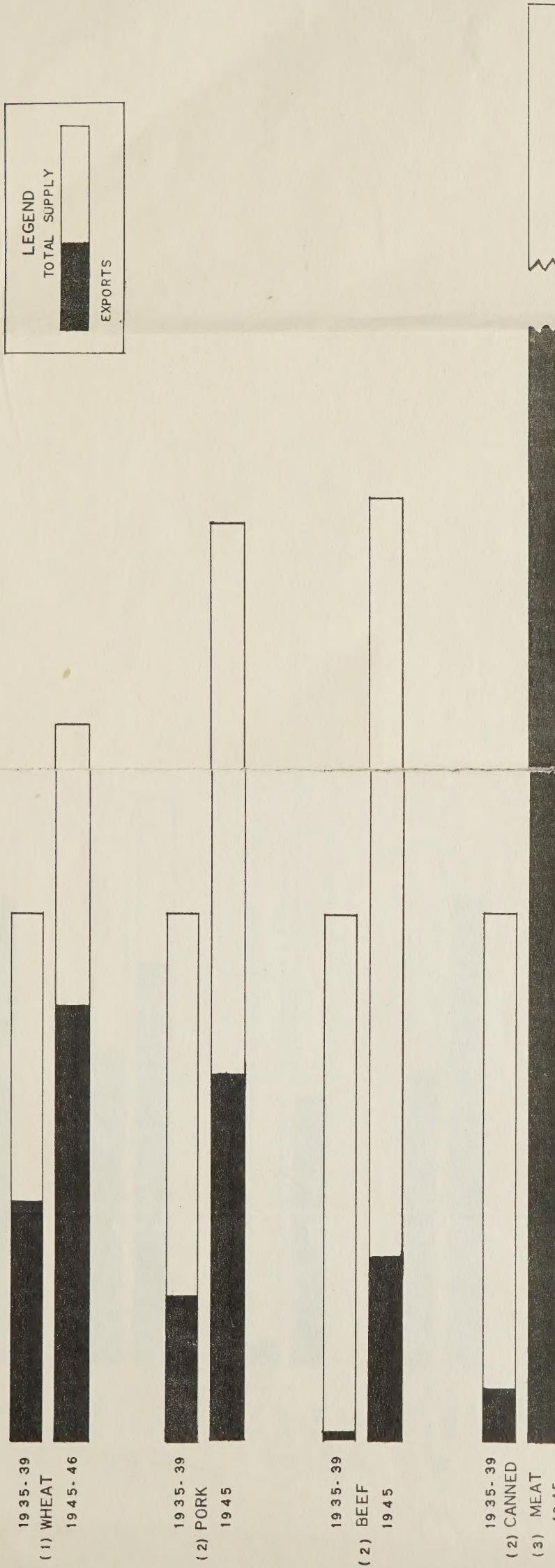
EGGS AND CHEESE.

Eggs and cheese have been important in the rations of the British people, and Canada's exports of these commodities have gone almost entirely to the United Kingdom. The average yearly export of eggs, both shell and powdered, rose from 7,223,000 dozen in the 1935-39 period to 114,623,000 dozen in 1945, an increase of 1487%. Cheddar cheese exports increased by 69% from the 1935-39 yearly average of 79,700,000 pounds to 135,409,000 pounds in 1945.

CONCENTRATED MILKS

Concentrated milks (evaporated, condensed and powdered) have likewise shown markedly increased production and in terms of milk solids content, exports expanded from an annual average of 11,643,000 pounds in 1935-39 to 35,791,000 pounds in 1945. At the same time, domestic disappearance of these products increased greatly. Canadian fluid milk consumption rose steadily during the war years until by 1945, it was approximately 16% above the 1935-39 level. Because of wartime shifts in population, as well as increased consumer purchasing power, local fluid milk supplies were frequently inadequate to take care of the demand. Concentrated products were drawn upon to meet the needs in such districts.

CANADA'S MAJOR FOOD EXPORTS AS PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NATIONAL SUPPLY



N.B. Total Supply 1935-39 = 100 per cent.
 Total Supply 1945 = percentage increase over total supply 1935-39.
 Exports = per cent of total supply.

1. Crop year basis (August 1, to July 31).
2. Calendar year basis.
3. 1945 total supply of canned meat = 824 per cent of prewar.
 1945 export of canned meat = 81 per cent of total supply.

(4)



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1939
(2) CANNED
(4) FISH
1944

1939
(2) FISH
(2) FRESH.
(4) FROZEN
OR CURED
1944

1935 - 39
(2) EGGS
(5) MILKS
1945

1935 - 39
CHEDDAR
(2) CHEESE
1945

1935 - 39
(2) CONC.
(6) MILKS
1945

4. Prewar five year average statistics not available
1944 figures are the latest official ones available.

5. Includes shell and powdered eggs.

6. Includes evaporated, condensed, and powdered milk (in terms of milk solids content.)

(5)

